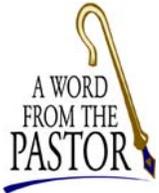


The Messenger

A newsletter of the people of First Lutheran Church, Waltham

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham
The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
www.firstlutheranwaltham.org

October 2021
781-893-6563
tmaehl@rcn.com



They [Paul and Timothy] went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. (Acts 16:6-7)

As modern persons, having been fed a steady diet of superhero movies (my favorite is The Incredibles), the story of St. Paul's adventures as described in the book of Acts seems Incredible. He endures beatings, imprisonments, ship wrecks; and yet he keeps going! Just as Popeye had his spinach, Paul has Christ. Empowered by the risen Christ, nothing can stop him! Or so it seems. However, buried in this little passage quoted above is evidence of failure.

Consider for a moment, how did Paul come to know that he was *forbidden to speak in Asia*, and *not allowed to go into Bithynia*? Singing telegram? Ouija board? Vision or dream? I believe he simply tried and failed. That is, he showed up in those places and began doing what he did everywhere; namely, appear at the place of public worship on the Jewish sabbath and begin speaking about Jesus, trusting that the Holy Spirit would be at work not only in his speaking but in the listening of those who gather.

How many Saturday's did he try this in Asia with no one interested? How many weeks did he last in Bithynia with no hospitality? It simply didn't work; the opposing forces were too strong. Nevertheless, Paul kept going. If you were to ask me, "What was Paul's superpower?" I would answer, "Endurance"

We are living in a time of pandemic. There are forces out there opposing us, whatever our goals, mission, purpose might be.

What are your goals, your mission, your purpose?

Yours and mine are not the same as Paul's. Paul believed the risen one has called him to start faith communities by proclaiming the good news of God's forgiveness, welcome (and call to new purpose) in and through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul believed that the Holy Spirit (or the Spirit of Christ) was the one who would take his proclamation and do something with it (or not); and so he simply kept going; he endured.

What are your goals, your mission, your purpose?

If you're not sure and are looking for ideas, consider the famous (and profound) prayer of St. Francis of Assisi,

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where
there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt,
faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is
darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.*

*O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console; to be under-
stood as to understand; to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardon-
ing that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that
we are born to eternal life. Amen.*

Is there a word or line in there that particularly 'jumps out' to you as you engage in whatever your present vocation happens to be.

Your call is not the same as Paul's (or anyone else's); and unlike Popeye, spinach will not work miracles. However, like Paul, the risen Christ is with you. With you when things go well; with you when things feel empty and dry. Keep at it, lean on Christ (whether you happen to 'feel' the warmth of his presence or happen to 'feel' alone).

Whether shipwrecks or beatings, uncertainty or pandemic, keep returning to your calling and endure!

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Nurturing Faith

Adult Forums Sundays 9:15 am Hybrid

For the month of October, adult forums will be led by Vicar Samantha. On October 3, we will do some brainstorming together about what we want Adult Forums to look like and where the Spirit might be leading us this fall.

For those who would like to join us virtually, please contact the church office. Join us in person or virtually as you are able.

Wednesday Evening Prayer followed by Conversation 7:00 pm

We are partnering with three other congregations to engage in evening prayer and conversation. Drawing from the book Soul Feast, by Marjorie Thompson, we will focus on traditional practices of Christianity. The schedule is as follows:

- September 29: Ayer - Thirst for the Spirit
- October 6: Waltham - Spiritual reading
- October 13: Arlington - Approaches to prayer
- October 20: Arlington - Our common worship
- October 27: Malden - Engaging sabbath
(the sacred art of ceasing)
- November 3: Waltham - Recovering the fast
- November 10: Arlington - Self examination
- November 17: Ayer - Spiritual Direction
- November 24: Malden - Hospitality

A zoom link will be shared in our "This Week from First Lutheran email." Join us as you are able.

Calling all Confirmation & Post-Confirmation Youth!

Mark your calendars for our

FALLING INTO THE HOLY SPIRIT LOCK-IN!

WHO: Confirmation and Post-Confirmation Youth

WHAT: This Lock-In will be a time for youth to gather all together as a community after so much time apart

WHEN: Oct. 15-16

WHERE: First Lutheran Church

WHY: Because God has called us to live in community!

Our Lock-In will kick off at 6pm on Friday with pizza, followed by some fun, games, conversations, worship, pumpkins, and community time. All are welcome to stay overnight, but not required and can arrange pick up in the evening. In the morning we will have a small continental breakfast available and then go in peace to share the good news.

Please RSVP by Friday, Oct. 8th, by emailing the church office.

In your RSVP please include any dietary restrictions.

Reopening Update

In September we successfully transitioned to in-person worship. We currently have a regular attendance of roughly 15-20 at the 8:15 am service (a service without singing); and 35-45 at the 10:30 service (a service with singing). Our schedule and protocols will continue unchanged through October.

Our thanks to all who are assisting and participating in-person and also to those who continue to participate (and offer supportive Facebook comments) virtually. We are thankful to be able to offer both kinds of worship experiences.

Nurturing Faith



*From the
Vicar*

Hello dear community! My name is Samantha DiBiasco and I am the new Vicar here at First Lutheran.

It has been a joy in my first month on internship to get to meet so many of you and to learn more about our community. I cannot thank you all enough for your radical hospitality and I am so excited to see what the Spirit has in store for us for the next two years together.

One of the main reasons I chose to attend Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, OH was because of their two-year internship program. After college I had the privilege of serving as a Young Adult in Global Mission (YAGM) in South Africa with the ELCA for a year. At the start of my time in South Africa, a year felt like ages to me. However, once I had reached my final month, I felt like I was just getting started.

Time has a funny way of moving at times so slowly, while simultaneously moving so fast.

In just my first month on internship, I have already had a variety of so many opportunities; opportunities to lead worship, to preach, to visit congregants at their homes or in the hospital, to help plan a youth lock-in, to practice my Spanish, and those are just to name a few! On top of all of that, I've had a lot of opportunities to explore my new home in New England by hiking at Prospect Hill, taking the bus to the North End, and visiting the famous Russo's just before they closed.

I am both in awe of my first month here at First Lutheran, and in shock that a month has already passed.

During my year in South Africa, I was taught a song called *Hamba Nathi* that was sung often at my church. On repeat, the lyrics would resound in the sanctuary:

*"Hamba nathi mkululu wethu
Mkululu, mkululu, mkululu wethu.
Come walk with us the journey is long.
The journey, the journey, the journey is long."*

I don't know what this two-year journey ahead will look, sound, or feel like. Maybe by the time we know it, two years will be up, and it will feel like we are just getting started. But what I do know is that God will be on the journey with us, continuously inviting us along the way, no matter how long or short the time together may feel.

Thanks be to God for the Spirit-led journey together ahead.

- Vicar Samantha

A/V Update

Our thanks to the A/V team for helping us transition from virtual worship to hybrid, in-person and live-streamed worship. In particular, thanks to Steve Hoff for relocating the audio/visual equipment to the balcony.



Worship Help Needed

Now that we are in person we are in need of the following leadership roles:

- Altar Care (set up for communion on Saturday and/or clean up after Sunday service)
- A/V Tech help for 10:30 am
- Assistant Minister for 10:30 am
- Lector for 8:15 or 10:30
- Counter after 10:30 service
- Preparing coffee for after 10:30 service

Doing Justice and Serving Others

Stewardship Update

In October we will be gathering financial pledges for the coming year. Specifically we are asking for pledges for the General Fund first, (*which pays for the basic operating of the church*), and then from those who are willing, additional pledges are welcomed for the Intern Fund. These are the two Funds that most impact our budgeting process. Gifts to other funds like the Capital Improvement Fund, Pastor's Discretionary Fund, Memorial Fund, or Calumet Scholarship Fund may be made at any time.



In early October, pledge cards will be sent out via email and

US postal mail (*see sample below*). In preparation, we ask that each person prayerfully consider the age-old, enduring question of Christian stewardship, *"Of all that God has given me, what am I being led to use for myself, what am I being led to share with the church, and what am I being led to give away in the care of others."*

Our thanks to all who contribute toward the ministry that God has entrusted to us through First Lutheran. Your gifts are a blessing!

Affordable Housing Ministry Update

The Board of the Nelson Memorial Apartments would like to report that there will be a two-bedroom apartment in the Everett Street apartment (with priority for senior citizens) available in the near future. If you are interested, please contact the church office for an application.

(Note: *The Nelson Memorial Apartments is a ministry of First Lutheran that maintains nine apartments and cares for senior members of First Lutheran in a variety of ways.*)



**Fall Retreat
November 12-14
Blue Gentian Lodge,
Londonderry, VT**

We currently have 13 people signed up for our annual retreat. If you would like to join us, please sign up by October 24. The full cost is \$165 per person; however, we invite college/graduate students, and others with financial uncertainty to contribute less (*speak with Pastor Maehl for more clarity*). The Cost includes 2 nights lodging and 4 meals. To sign up contact the church office.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church 2022 Estimate of Giving

Names(s) _____

In thanksgiving to God who richly blesses us, I/we commit* to give back to God through the ministry of our church:

General Offering \$ _____ per _____

Intern \$ _____ per _____

* Financial circumstances do change, this commitment may be revised at any time.



**New Member Reception
November 21**

We are planning on receiving new members during worship on Sunday, November 21. If you are interested in formally joining the congregation at this time, please contact Pastor Maehl.

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Sarah Allen; Jen Biter; Joan Clemens; Rosy Hebert; Eddie Hughes; June Jahrling; Erika Jerram; Steve Latter; Kathryn McCowan; Cynthia Niiler, Joan and Jüri Niiler, Sandra Schwab.

Friends and Family: Adekemi (*friend of Sarah Rauhut*); Heather Budd (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Greta Carlson (*friend of Connie Danielson*); Elaine Chan (*aunt of Catherine Pinch*); Christiansen family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Emily Clemens (*niece of Joan Clemens*); Lavara Clemens (*mother of Joan Clemens*); Leslie Crowe (*friend of Connie and Jeanette Fagone*); Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Chuck Flinner (*father of Kat Flinner*); Bob Hofgren (*brother of Janice Ostrander*); Norma Huisman (*aunt of Brad Nederhoff*); Ellen Katterheinrich (*LuAnn Kimker's mother*); Sylvia and Chris Lee-Thompson (*friend of Susan Pintus*); Chris Lochran (*friend of Connie and Jeanette Fagone*); Myles Martins and parents (*infant nephew of Cat Niemann*); Peter Melanson (*brother-in-law of Matt and Erika Jerram*); Jason Mihalko (*friend of Matt Jerram*); Sally Raymond (*Jen Biter's mom*); Stacey Reed (*sister of Penny Alexander*); Margarita Rivera (*friend of Rachel Nederhoff*); Margie and Roger Schroeder (*Curt Schroeder's parents*); Ann Sewich (*sister of Meg Maehl*); Doug Sewich (*brother-in-law of Meg and Tom Maehl*); Maria Silva (*aunt of Olga Jimenez*); Matthew Stanhope (*partner of Jane Danielson*); Wayne & Carol Sukow (*parents of Cathy Sukow*); Gary Swartzenberg (*friend of Janice and Dennis Ostrander*); Tara Waters (*family of Penny & Marquette Alexander*); Jim Wroe (*cousin of Carol Hansen*).

For those who grieve: the family and friends of Connie Danielson, the family and friends of Pam Sperry, Cleo Carsten (relative of the Biters).

For our partners: Santuario Luterano, the Spanish speaking Lutheran congregation in Waltham, and for their interim leaders: Pastor Cassandra Chavez and Vicar Hector Lugo Cuadrado. For other organizations we actively support: the Waltham Family School, the Waltham Community Day Center, Chaplains on the Way, the Waltham Alliance to Create Housing, Camp Calumet, and ELCA World Hunger.

If you would like to add/remove a name to/from the prayer list, please inform the church office.



Congratulations Pastor* Courtney Smith

Congratulations to our former intern Courtney Smith (who was with us 2019-2020). Courtney has been called to serve as pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in Oakland, NJ.

*Her ordination is scheduled for November 13 in Pennsylvania. We pray God's blessings upon her and the congregation she has been called to serve!

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham

Ministers: The people of the congregation

Staff: The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
tmaehl@rcn.com

Ms. Cynthia Niiler,
Director of Music and Parish Secretary
firstlutheranwalthamoffice@gmail.com

Vicar Samantha DiBiaso, Intern
sdibiaso@capital.edu

Council: President: Ann Sjodin
Vice-President: LuAnn Kimker
Secretary: Julie Weeden
Treasurer: Susan Pintus

Holly Diaz
Sammy Kalisa
Jennifer Lambert
Beth Mellilo
Curt Schroeder

Worship:

Sundays:
8:15 am in person
10:30 am in person and Facebook Live

Visit us on the Web at:

www.firstlutheranwaltham.org



and on Facebook at First Lutheran
Church - Waltham, MA

Our Mission: We discern that Jesus Christ is calling us to:

Walk together in God's love: nurturing faith, doing justice, serving all.